

Herman Vilorio
Mississauga Trustee
Wards 2 & 8



May 2023



May is the month of Our Mother Mary

Spring is the season when nature awakens from its winter slumber. Trees and flowers begin to bloom again, and the sun warms the earth. May is also the month of Mary. The tradition of dedicating the month of May to Mary began centuries ago. The Catholic Church honors Mary, the mother of God, the entire month, not just one day. This May, look for ways to cultivate a relationship with Our Mother Mary.

Catholic Education Week 2023 – Catholic Education Week 2023 will be held April 30-May 5. The theme is ***We are Many, We are One***. It provides unique opportunities to highlight what Catholic Education means, as well as to celebrate the identity and distinctive nature of our Catholic schools. Catholic Trustees are stewards and advocates of Catholic education and for the students entrusted to our care. In Ontario, we come together as 29 Catholic school boards and locally as 500 publicly funded Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Toronto. We are grateful that our Catholic schools foster a learning environment rooted in our call to love and serve, inspired by our Catholic faith.

May 1 - DPCDSB Staff Appreciation Day – We express our gratitude to all staff at the DPCDSB for the important work they do in the service of publicly funded Catholic education for the children and youth entrusted to our care.

Budget Update – On April 17, 2023, the Ministry of Education made announcements on Memorandum 2023: B04 - 2023-24 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Funding, 2023: B05 – 2023-24 Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF) and Bill 98, *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act* (Bill 98). To improve outcomes for students, the Ministry has announced new PPF funding for math, de-streaming and reading. These new targeted funding announcements are closely aligned with the proposed amendments coming out of Bill 98. It is important to note that PPF funds are time-limited for specific funding areas, with restrictions and accountability measures. It is also critically important to highlight that time-limited funding from the current 2022-2023 year is expiring: the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund and the Tutoring Grant will not continue into the 2023-2024 school year. It is the Ministry's expectation that school board operations will normalize following the pandemic and therefore, this targeted funding is no longer required.

GSN funding is projected to increase by 2.7 percent provincially, accounting for salary compensation increases, enrolment changes across the province and adjustments in the student transportation funding model. Bill 98, if passed, has potential to significantly change the education system in Ontario and ensure a unified focus on student achievement, particularly in reading, writing and math. The Ministry believes the proposed amendments would ensure students graduate with a competitive advantage while learning modern curricula in modern schools,

Extraordinary lives start with a great Catholic education.

preparing them for jobs of the future. For more information, please visit the April 24, 2023 – Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda on the DPCDSB website.

Long-term Facilities Master Plan (LTFMP) – DPCDSB student enrolment trends over the past 20-year period from 2012 to 2032 are used to inform the development of the LTFMP, which will serve as a roadmap to guide DPCDSB in planning for the facility accommodation needs, including future capital investments, to support all students in the future. The LTFMP identifies areas of enrolment growth and decline within DPCDSB, as well as potential strategies our Board of Trustees may wish to consider in addressing future enrolment changes.

Across Ontario, all school boards have experienced varying trends in enrolment over the last few years. It has been widely reported that families are moving from areas such as Peel Region to other communities outside of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), where housing costs are not as limiting. DPCDSB has experienced continued enrolment decline from the 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 school years. A decline of over 1,354 students over this twelve-month period can be attributed to many factors, including admission and demission of students year-over-year, families emigrating from the jurisdiction of DPCDSB and the changing demographics in Peel Region. Overall, DPCDSB is expected to experience a net enrolment decline of approximately -7.76% (-5,621 total students) over the next ten years, which is comprised of a projected decline in the elementary panel of approximately -3.91% (-1,664 elementary students) and a projected decline in the secondary panel of -13.24% (-3,957 secondary students). There are still some areas within the board that are experiencing enrolment growth. For more information, please see the April 11, 2023 - Administration and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda on the DPCDSB website.

Student Transportation of Peel Region (STOPR) Update – STOPR continues to monitor all contracted bus operators through monthly reporting to ensure an adequate number of drivers to operate all routes. Recruiting, training, and hiring new drivers is ongoing to ensure routes have assigned drivers, spare drivers, and vehicles to meet the required service levels. While the number of available spare drivers has declined in some areas, STOPR continues to work with bus companies to support them with ongoing recruitment and training efforts for new drivers. This will assist them operationally while they continue to ramp up their driver recruitment and training efforts.

As of March 2023, online school bus safety sessions have been delivered to more than 75 DPCDSB schools. These online safety sessions are funded by the Ministry of Education and are especially designed for primary-aged students (JK to grade 3) and Junior/Intermediate students (Grades 4 to 8).

A new customer service enhancement from STOPR is the introduction and staged implementation plan of a new school bus tracking application known as the *Chipmunk App*. The *Chipmunk App* will provide real-time data about the arrival time of a school bus at a bus stop to students and families. It is compatible with all mobile device platforms and allows parents/guardians and students the ability to track the location of a school bus. STOPR will phase-in the introduction at one DPCDSB school per week, beginning the week of April 17, 2023 to ensure that the technology and user interface are functioning appropriately. STOPR staff will communicate with each participating school prior to the rollout to provide administrators and families with information on how to use the *Chipmunk App* and enroll. It is anticipated the launch of the *Chipmunk App* across the entire STOPR network will not occur until October 2023. For more information, please visit the April 11, 2023 - Administration and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda.

School Messenger – In response to feedback from our DPCDSB parent/guardian communities using the School Messenger App, an open field will be added to indicate more details for a student's absence. This new feature will be available for September, 2023.

In terms of timelines for reporting attendance, following are system standards which cannot be altered:

- Elementary Schools: Schools have been advised to instruct parents and guardians to report their child's absence before or by the local school bell time. After this threshold is met, parents and guardians can no longer use the School Messenger app or the Toll-Free number to report their child's absence and must call the school directly.
- Secondary Schools: No deadlines; parents and guardians can report absences throughout the school day. A courtesy call to parents and guardians is delivered around 6:00 pm to indicate unexplained absences.

CCCSC Parent Engagement – The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) is hosting a parent engagement event on Saturday May 13 at St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School in Mississauga. We are pleased to welcome Keynote Speaker: Teresa Harnett: We are Many, We Are One, Weaving the Catholic Partnership. Breakout sessions include topics on: Equity/Inclusivity/Anti-Black Racism, Religion/Family Life/Fully Alive Curriculum, Safe Schools Protocols, Mental-Health and Well-Being and Meeting the Diverse Learning Needs of our Students.

May 14 – Mothers' Day.

Happy Mother's Day to all our mothers and grandmothers!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Herman Vioria

DPCDSB Trustee – Mississauga, Wards 2 and 8

Vice Chair – Faith and Program Committee

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board - 40 Matheson Boulevard West, Mississauga ON L5R 1C5

Mobile: (416) 452-9345 | Email: Herman.Vioria@dpcdsb.org

Website: www.dpcdsb.org | YouTube: DPCDSBVideos